From: New England Jewish Labor Committee
To: Richard Willette
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VICTORY AT HARVARD!

Strike Concludes With a Win for Workers

Photo credit: UNITE HERE! Local 26

After a three week long strike, Harvard dining workers have settled their contract with the University and will return to work tomorrow morning. After months of negotiations, over 700 Harvard University Dining Services (HUDS) workers represented by UNITE HERE! Local 26 went on strike at 6AM on October 5, demanding a sustainable annual income of $35,000, affordable healthcare, and more opportunities for year-round work.

On Tuesday, the Harvard Student Labor Action Movement (SLAM), including NE JLC Campus Initiative Fellow Grace Evans and former Fellow Gabe Hodgkins, lead a student walk-out from class to support workers engaged in bargaining. Students and workers outside of the bargaining room put pressure on the University through a student sit-in and a HUDS-led picket outside. At 1:30AM, the union announced that they had reached a tentative agreement with the school.

Today, HUDS workers voted to ratify the new contract by a margin of 583 yes votes to 1 no vote. The new contract will increase full-time workers' pay to $35,000 over the course of the 4-year agreement. According to the school, the average HUDS worker now makes $34,000 per year, though the union estimates that figure is closer to $31,000 per year. And while HUDS workers' health plan will change, the University has agreed to cover all increased co-pay costs. For more on the contract, listen to today's WBUR interview with Brian Lang here.

The NE JLC has been active in supporting HUDS workers throughout their fight. We have joined workers on the picket line, rallied, and supported students organizing in

support of workers. Our annual community meeting last Thursday focused on the HUDS strike, where we were honored to hear from three HUDS workers, Aaron Ducket, Annabella Pappas, and Chris Pappas, as well as from Brian Lang, President of Local 26. We collected almost $400 for the HUDS strike assistance fund. NE JLC Board Co-Chair Don Siegel wrote a letter for *The Harvard Crimson* in support of the strike.

The Harvard Hillel community, from the rabbis to the students, was active in its support for the strike. Please read more about Harvard Hillel's role in supporting HUDS workers here.

Over the course of the strike, HUDS workers received support from numerous sources, from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Harvard faculty and alumni to the Boston Globe Editorial Board.

Congratulations to the workers who courageously stood up to demand that Harvard do the right thing! HUDS workers remind us all that workers have true power in unity. When we fight, we win!

Join the us by becoming a JLC member here.

Thanks so much for your support,
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